

GEORGE THOMPSON IN NEW-YORK.

A WELCOME BY GEN. F. CLINTON.

MR. THOMPSON'S SPEECH.

A large audience assembled last evening in the Cooper Institute to greet the old and tried friend of freedom everywhere and for all men, George Thompson of England.

At 8 o'clock, John C. Fremont and Mr. Thompson came upon the platform, amid very loud applause.

Gen. Fremont, on taking the chair, said:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I am glad to see that you are in a temper of mind which promises a very cordial welcome to our guest of the evening. I thank you very sincerely for your friendly reception of myself, and thank you warmly for him—under the circumstances, it will be especially grateful to him. Coming here after an interval of years, he cannot be expected immediately to realize the change which has been worked in the country, and impressions from very different scenes which we witnessed here, cannot yet be effaced from his memory.

When he was last here, the country was at peace, and men do not readily hazard its blessings. To people who were unwilling to enter upon the discussion of a question which threatened to disturb their interests, they were not willing to inflict upon themselves or the Southern people the penalties which attend a great reform. Then discussions upon Slavery were held to involve them in the direct and flagrant services of an institution essentially at war with the principles of our Government to bring men to consider it, and to rouse them into action against it. He failed to realize the change, and until he does, every such expression of friendly feeling must give him peculiar satisfaction. It may not seem to you entirely appropriate that I should preside over this meeting. It might seem more fitting that some one of older date in the Anti-Slavery struggle—some one of those who had incurred the censorious criticism of the many, and deserved to which his life has been much exposed, should stand by his side to-night to receive and share in your generous recognition. But in giving him this welcome back to the country we desire to bring distinctly before him the new phase through which it is passing. Slavery, now held to be incompatible with Union, liberty, then denied speech, now holding the sword; the Nation in arms for the principle he advocated hostile to compromise, impudent of delays; his old tolerance changed to stern and deep rebuke; and with it the places which he held now seem to be no more. As one belonging to the body of the people to whom he has been brought by the logic of events forced their consideration upon every man, and with the object of adding our gage to realize the unanimity with which the nation is moving to the accomplishment of its object, I am honored with a request to preside here this evening. To our guest it must be more agreeable to realize the present than to remember the past. Be it so, and we can use to express our obligations to him and his friends on the other side of the water for the services they have rendered us; to thank him individually, and as one of a class which England represents the public confidence, loving justice, and inherent of oppression, and to whom we are indebted for continuous adherence to our cause from the beginning of this war. Their sympathies for us reached from the starving Manchester operative to the poor girl who toiled in our laundry, up to the thousand fires which it touched and kindled.

Indications during the past year have led us to infer a disposition toward friendliness on the part of England. This may come in part from an opposition to French policy, and more recently from that necessity for an ally which England begins to feel. But we believe it mainly due to the services which she has rendered to us, to render an alliance between us possible. We recognize this influence in the chuck it has given to Southern sympathizers among them, and we take pleasure in believing that it has been under pressure of the same influences that England withdrew from an alliance with the attemped rebels in America, than from the rank of 500,000 Southern troops which she has sent to the service of the United States.

England's sympathy, which she has shown to the stability of its institutions, and to the welfare of the people to whom her name has been brought by the logic of events, has been brought by the logic of events which forced their consideration upon every man, and with the object of adding our gage to realize the unanimity with which the nation is moving to the accomplishment of its object, I am honored with a request to preside here this evening.

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A sin corrupting all the land;

A sin within thy gates—post-

Gold and a Babylonian west;

Not bad in shame, concealing shade,

Revealed in sin, and swifly bring

Death from the camp the accursed thing!

Conscience to remorseless fire;

Wrath from the hand of hell;

No leave an atom weak behind!"

This was the very head and front of my offending. I come again, and what do I behold? This mighty and magnificent nation in the throes of another revolution, a higher helter revolution than that of 1776. That was for Independence, and this for Universal Liberty! [Great applause.] What raised the whole world to arms? Was it not to free us from the tyrant? [Applause.] I come to find you in deadly grapple with your deadliest foes—slavery; ever your foe, and ever to bear you until you pinched it up root and branch and brandish it in triumph o'er the heads of the tyrants. [Applause.]

Came among you, too, unchanged, without a principle, without a cause, without a right, without a wrong, the same old view in view, but still with the same right, and as a devoted patriot. There were millions of hours in England which have been dedicated to the service of your fellow-countrymen into the hands of the chief magistrate of this Republic. [He newed cheering.] You did not reach that elevation, but you received the free spontaneous suffrages of 1,300,000 of your people. And you have had a glorious record, and your cause is now in full flower, and it would have done well for America. [Applause.] There would have been no tritors in the Cabinet. [Cheering.] There would have been no felonious abstraction of Indian bodies; no transportation of arms from the arsenals of the Northern States. You would have had a right to demand that there would have been no dispersion of the navy to the four quarters of the earth, so that when the nation's salvation was at stake, but one vessel could be found. There would have been no plotting for the annexation of Texas and Central America. There would have been no subordination to the slave power. I believe you would have worked a miracle as great as that of St. Patrick in Ireland. [Laughter.] You would have banished all kinds of snakes from the country, whether they be political or commercial. But, sir, in England we know you not, as men of man's ingenuity, and they are still laboring in narrow paths—brooding to be sure, and brightening—for the rough ground is yet to be ploughed, and the sun is already rising. We give deep sympathy and honor to the men who have done so much for us, and their isolated paths of self-sacrifice, duty, sacrifice, political and social excommunication—these heroes of a moral altitude! But even as it is, our Reformers have a better lot than history usually records for such, they have the satisfaction not only to see but to enter with the people whom they led into the promised land. And perhaps they are well satisfied to repose, and to rest upon their labored work, feeling surely that they have done their duty, and that their posterity will rise up to the task which they have done. Sometimes in my travels, the traveler finds himself shrouded in fog and the way so hidden, the features of the country so singularly changed from the reality that he cannot safely move. But if some friendly mountain side lets him ascend a few hundred feet above, he finds himself suddenly in a clear atmosphere with a blue sky and a shining sun. Below him, the smaller objects that misled and bewildered him hide, before his eyes, and out, and out, and clear, the leading ridge, and great outlines of the country which point out to him the right way, and show him where he may reach a place of security and repose for the night, and where goes his journey home. And so it is with those men who devote their lives, unflinchingly and singly, to the public good—to the maintenance of principles and the advocacy of great reforms. They live in a pure atmosphere. And such ought also to be the character of the men whom we elevate to our high places. Raised into that upper air, and sharing with it the safety, they are expected to be impersonal; to be disinterested; to be willing to sacrifice their personal ambitions and individual interests which of necessity impel men acting individually, their horizon is universal, and they so broadly define the great principles which had a nation continuously on to settled prosperity and a sure glory, and as a condition of our material safety we should see to it that only such men are put in such places. Men on whom we can rely, a conviction and realizing a necessity—men able to carry the spirit of the age and the country in which we live, and fitly working up to it. I have made these few remarks, partly because they flow from my subject, and partly to suggest such ideas as may be an introduction to what our guest will have to say. I did not dwell upon acts that are necessary familiar to you, but I desired merely to revive in your minds the character and services of the man whom he represents, and with permission I will now present him to you. Ladies and gentlemen, I have the honor to introduce a representative of the Liberal Democracy of England, and a tried friend of America. Mr. George Thompson.

The audience here arose and loud and hearty cheers and waving of hats, welcomed the distinguished speaker.

The Hon. GEORGE THOMPSON, then spoke as follows:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: When in my own country I have been called, as I frequently have been to meet in conflict with those who have misrepresented—often because they misunderstood—and have injured the people and the institutions of this great country, I have generally found something to say, and however deficient in other respects, I have in such circumstances, neither lacked courage nor confidence. [Applause.] I have felt courage because I knew my cause was good. [Applause.] I have felt confidence because I knew my arguments and my facts were irrefutable. [Applause.] But placed in a position such as I have the honor to occupy to-night, however gratifying to my feelings, however a cause of exultation, of unspeakable joy, of deep thankfulness, as an indication of the march of progress in the public sentiment in this country, which is still so much feeler and more advanced, admirably to express my feelings, and satisfactorily to acknowledge that compliment which has been paid me by your honorable and gallant Chairman, and responded so warmly by yourselves. [Applause.] For 35 years of my life I have lived in the atmosphere of controversy. All those years have been spent in conflict, grappling with great abuses, endeavoring to dispel those ignorance, to advance the same and the deepest, and contending with the high, and the mighty, and the strong. How then shall we, unaided in the piping times of peace—you know the peace, I mean—dis-

charge the duty which now devolves upon me. I may say with Othello, when he stood before the Venetian Senate,

"Ende I am in myself,
And little blessed with the set phrase of peace."

For I have used
My deepest action in the testifying,
And therefore, I will guess my cause,
And leave for myself."

Yet, Sir, with your generous patience, I will as speedily as possible get away from myself the most unworthy of all topics, and come to some matters in which you and I are interested in common, and in the discussion of which I may take leave of the platform of the English. But, Mr. Chairman and citizens of New York, I cannot stand here, and contemplate the present—I cannot stand here, and contemplate the present—without looking forward and anticipate swift-coming events, without fearing unutterable suffering in the circumstances in which I am surrounded. Only those in this audience which are here, and whose reelection will carry them back for 30 years, or who are cognizant of the transactions of that distant day, can understand or feel further the depth and intensity of those emotions which have driven me to utterance in my breast. Thirty years ago I landed upon the shores of America, the city in which I was accompanied by my wife, by two infant children, and by a maid servant. I sought a temporary lodgings in a small inn, a room, a matress, well-conditioned, respectable hotel. But ere forty-eight hours had passed I was expelled from that hotel, and as I would not expose my friends in this city—few but precious few but noble, men and women of whom America then was not worthy, and none of whom yet to do before she will be worthy of them—had I no place to go? Coming here after an interval of years, I cannot be expected immediately to realize the change which has been worked in the country, and impressions from very different scenes which we witnessed here, cannot yet be effaced from his memory.

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